

In the Claims

1-11. (cancelled)

12. (new) A filter element, comprising:

a filter medium with opposite first and second end areas;

first and second end caps coupled to said first and second end areas, respectively, by cement beds forming an insulating layer between each said end cap and the respective end area;

a support tube supporting said filter medium on one side of said filter medium; and

contact pins on at least said first end cap for dissipating electrostatic charges occurring in filter element operation, said contact pins penetrating the respective cement bed making dissipative contact with said filter medium, each of said contact pins having opposite ends with one end penetrating the respective cement bed and the other end extending vertically from said first end cap.

13. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein

said first end cap and said contact pins are formed of a plastic with a conductivity additive.

14. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein

said first end cap and said contact pins have conductive coatings.

15. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein

said first end cap and said contact pins are formed of an intrinsically conductive plastic.

16. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein

said filter medium comprises a pleated or cylindrically shaped filter mat with filter plies in several layers on top of one another and of entirely or partially dissipative plastic materials.

17. (new) A filter element according to claim 16 wherein

said filter mat is reinforced on one side with fabric materials of plastic or metal.

18. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein

said filter medium is supported on said support tube in a fluid flow direction through said filter medium, said support tube comprising passages and being of plastic material.

19. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein

said contact pins are of conductive metal or dissipative plastic.

20. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein

said contact pins are arranged in circles concentric to a longitudinal axis of the filter element.

21. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein  
said first end cap comprises inside and outside projecting annular surfaces receiving said  
first end area of said filter medium therebetween.

22. (new) A filter element according to claim 12 wherein  
said first end cap comprises a connecting part for fixing the filter element in a filter  
housing; and  
a dissipative seal is on said first end cap for engaging the filter housing.

23. (new) A filter element according to claim 22 wherein  
said seal is an O-ring.